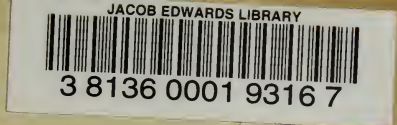


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THIRTY-NINTH
ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

School Committee

OF THE TOWN OF

SOUTHBRIDGE.

For the Year Ending March, 1, 1878.

SOUTHBRIDGE :
SOUTHBRIDGE JOURNAL STEAM PRESS.
1878.



MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE.

ELISHA M. PHILLIPS.....Elected April 3, 1876—3 years.
GEORGE A. JACKSON.....“ “ 2, 1877—3 “
BENJAMIN V. STEVENSON.....Appointed May 4, 1877, to fill
a vacancy,

TRUANT OFFICERS.

GEORGE H. THAYER.

SAMUEL F. FREEMAN,

JOSEPH M. OLNEY,

MICHAEL MAHONEY.

REPORT.

The School Committee present to the Town the following as their Thirty-eighth Annual Report :

New Schools. During the year two new Primary Schools have been opened, one in Dresser village and one on Main street, near Columbian village. For the accommodation of these schools two new school houses have been erected. Both of these buildings have two rooms so that there are now two excellent school rooms unoccupied. That the town was wise, however, in providing these ample accommodations is proved by the fact that already the Main street primaries are overflowing, and by autumn, at furthest, a new school will be required. Unless the working force of the mills is materially reduced the Globe room will also be occupied soon.

The new school near Columbian village, being the second upon Main street has been named by your Committee the "Carpenter School," in honor of Rev. Eben Carpenter, the first chairman, and for twenty-five years a member of the School Committee.

Besides these new buildings the upper room of the Elm street building has been finished during the year, and the school which was temporarily in the Town Hall has been removed thither.

Enforcement The principal matter of interest during the year of school laws, has been connected with the enforcement of the law in regard to school attendance. This law, which had so long remained a dead letter, is now being rigidly enforced *by the State authorities*. In anticipation of this new strictness, your Committee, during the summer vacation, published, in the JOURNAL, the names of those children who would be obliged to enter school at the beginning of the Fall term, hoping thereby to obviate trouble both for parents and Committee. We are happy to state that, with some few exceptions, we have found a willingness to comply with the law. We wish also to recognize the heartiness with which our manufacturers have aided in securing the attendance at school of the children in their employ; this, oftentimes, at great inconvenience to themselves. These gentlemen have, however, suggested what your Committee have also found to be desirable, viz.: Either such a modification of the law as shall give the Committee some discretion about enforcing the law in the case of very poor families; Or more adequate provision for the support of such families when deprived of the services of those upon whom they are actually dependent.

As there has been considerable difference of opinion as to how the present law should be understood, we publish the statute and the manner in which the Committee, after hearing the opinion of two of the legal gentlemen of the town, have interpreted it.

[Chap. 52, Statutes of 1876.]

An Act relating to the Employment of Children, and regulations respecting them.

SECT. 1. No child under the age of ten years shall be employed in any manufacturing, mechanical or mercantile establishment in this Commonwealth, and any parent or guardian who permits such employment shall, for such offence, forfeit a sum of not less than twenty nor more than fifty dollars, for the use of the public schools of the city or town.

SECT. 2. No child under the age of fourteen years shall be so employed unless during the year next preceding such employment

he has attended some public or private day school, under teachers approved by the school committee of the place where such school is kept, at least twenty weeks, which time may be divided into two terms, each of ten consecutive weeks, so far as the arrangements of school terms will allow; nor shall such employment continue, unless such child shall attend school as herein provided, in each and every year; and no child shall be so employed who does not present a certificate, made by or under the direction of said school committee, of his compliance with the requirements of this act: *provided, however*, that a regular attendance during the continuance of such employment in any school known as a half time day school, or an attendance in any public or private day school, twenty weeks, as above stated, may be accepted by said School Committee as a substitute for the attendance herein required.

SECT. 3. Every owner, superintendent or overseer in any establishment above named, who employs or permits to be employed, any child in violation of the second section of this act; and every parent or guardian who permits such employment, shall, for such offence, forfeit a sum of not less than twenty nor more than fifty dollars for the use of the public schools of such city or town.

SECT. 4. The truant officer shall, at least once in every school term, and as often as the School Committee require, visit the establishments described by this act in their several cities and towns and inquire into the situation of the children employed therein; ascertain whether the provisions of this act are duly observed, and report all violations to the School Committee.

SECT. 5. All acts and parts of acts inconsistent with the provisions of this act are hereby repealed.

The Committee understand that this requires twenty weeks of schooling during each and every twelve months between the eighth and fourteenth birthday of every child—not during each year of Our Lord. For example, Joseph Lovely was ten years old August 30, 1877; he began to attend school September 3, 1877, and continued ten weeks during the Fall term and ten during the Winter term, completing his twenty weeks February 21, 1878. The Committee accordingly issued to him a certificate of the following form;

CERTIFICATE.

No. 40.

This certifies that Joseph Lovely, aged 10 years, has attended school in the town of Southbridge twenty weeks, from September 3, 1877, to February 21, 1878.

Signed by Teacher.

Approved by } School
 } Committee

This certificate entitled the boy to work until September 3, 1878, or until the expiration of twelve months from the time when he began to attend school.

Such certificates as this, an accurate record of which is kept by the Committee, are issued to all who are entitled to them, and no manufacturer in town will now employ a child of school age who does not present one.

We have explained this matter in detail that hereafter there may be no misunderstanding on the part of either employer or parent, and that the Committee may not be solicited to do what the law gives them no power to do.

Private schools must be approved. As the Committee have been applied to repeatedly for certificates for children, on the ground that they have attended certain private schools, the attention of parents is called to the following clause of the act ;

SECT. 2. No child shall be employed unless during the year next preceding such employment he has attended some public or private day school, *under teachers approved by the School Committee of the place where such school is kept, etc.*

In order that this law may be observed with as little inconvenience as possible, the Committee deem it necessary to keep one of the schools in session through the summer vacation. The locality of such school will be determined by the residence of the majority of those who desire to attend.

Truancy.

In connection with this matter of certificates, the Committee wish to call the serious attention of parents to one great cause of discouragement to all concerned with our schools. This is the large number of absences on the part of the pupils. Some of these absences are the result of truancy. The cure for this evil is to be found, not simply in the appointment of truant officers, who shall, upon the request of teachers, look up delinquents; but, far more, in the vigilance of parents, who should themselves see to it that their children are *actually* as well as *nominally* in school. Some parents, on applying for certificates for their children to go to work, have been greatly surprised to find how few weeks they have really been in school. "Our children," they have said, "have not worked for more than six months, and now they ought to have certificates." "True," we have had to reply, "your children might have had certificates, if they had been regular, instead of irregular, in their attendance; but the law requires that we reckon only the days upon which scholars are actually present at school (counting five days to the week) and to give certificates accordingly. If, therefore, you desire certificates for your children at the end of twenty weeks, you must make sure that they not only *do not work*, but that they *do go to school*."

Excused absences.

But very many of these absences, we are sorry to say, are not merely not prompted by parents, but are actually excused, if not caused, by parents. One teacher—your committee are almost ashamed to confess that they have allowed it—but one teacher received during a single term of the past year one hundred and twenty excuses from parents for the absence of their children. What now, fathers and mothers, can you expect us to do for your children, if you allow this? We know well enough that you do not intend injury to your own, by granting them excuses. On the contrary, you say to yourselves that you are only consulting their health, in keeping them out of school occasionally. But these "occasions" are far more frequent than many of you realize—more frequent, we are warranted in saying, than a reasonable regard for

health can demand. Would it not be far better, if you find that your children are being overworked, to do as some have done this past year, who came to the Committee and told us that they feared we were exacting too much of their children, and asked for a lessening of their work. The Committee, upon hearing the facts, cheerfully granted the request, and directed the teacher (who was also overworking herself) to lighten her own and her pupils' labors. This simple reminder, made with all kindness, we hope will lead parents to think seriously about every excuse which they grant.

COURSE OF STUDY.

As ten years have elapsed since the course of study in our schools has been published, and as important changes have been made during that period, the Committee have thought such a publication desirable. The course covers a period of thirteen years after the scholar leaves the first primary. The time spent in that department will vary greatly with the capacities and home advantages of the pupils, some remaining there less than a year, others remaining two years or more.

FIRST PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

Preparatory to Second Primary. Course not prescribed.

SECOND PRIMARY SCHOOLS—3 YEARS.

FIRST YEAR.

Reading.—First and second terms, in Franklin Second Reader. Third term, in Franklin Third Reader.

Spelling.—From Worcester's Speller.

Arithmetic.—Adding and subtracting simple numbers. Multiplication table begun.

Geography.—Oral Instruction.

Punctuation.

Drawing and Singing.

SECOND YEAR.

Reading.—Franklin Third Reader.

Spelling.—From Reader and Worcester's Speller.

Arithmetic.—Tables.
Geography.—Oral Instruction.
Punctuation and Abbreviations.
Drawing, Singing and Writing.

THIRD YEAR.

Reading.—Franklin Third Reader.
Spelling.—From Reader and Speller; also, the third term, written exercises.
Arithmetic.—Greenleaf's Primary begun and completed; also, writing and adding large numbers on blackboard.
Geography.—Advanced Oral Instruction.
Punctuation and Abbreviations.
Drawing, Singing and Writing.

INTERMEDIATE SCHOOLS—3 YEARS.

FIRST YEAR.

Reading.—Franklin Fourth Reader. Punctuation.
Spelling.—Worcester's Speller and Definer. Abbreviation.
Geography.—Swinton's Elementary, to Asia.
Arithmetic.—Greenleaf's Intellectual, to page 78.
Writing.—Three lessons a week. Payson, Dunton and Scribner's copy books.
Drawing and Singing.

SECOND YEAR.

Reading.—Franklin Fourth Reader.
Spelling.—Worcester's Speller and Definer; words spelled orally and written on blackboards. Abbreviations.
Geography.—Swinton's Elementary, completed, and reviewed.
Arithmetic.—Greenleaf's Intellectual, to page 120.
Writing.—Three lessons a week. Payson, Dunton and Scribner's copy books.
Drawing and Singing.

THIRD YEAR.

Reading.—Franklin Fourth Reader.
Spelling.—Same as second year.
Geography.—Swinton's Complete Course, to page 69.

Arithmetic.—Greenleaf's Intellectual, completed and reviewed.

Grammar.—Oral Instruction.

Writing.—Three times a week. Payson, Dunton and Scribner's copy books.

Drawing and Singing.

Throughout this course special attention is given to grounding the pupils in the *first truths* of Arithmetic, Geography and Grammar by means of Oral Instruction.

GRAMMAR SCHOOLS—3 YEARS.

FIRST YEAR.

Reading.—Franklin's Fifth Reader.

Spelling.—Oral and written, from Worcester's Speller and Definer.

Arithmetic.—Greenleaf's New Practical, to Weights and Measures.

Geography.—Swinton's Complete Course, completed.

Grammar.—Whitney's Essentials of English Grammar.

Writing, Drawing and Singing.

SECOND YEAR.

Reading.—Franklin's Fifth Reader.

Spelling.—Same as first year.

Arithmetic.—Greenleaf's New Practical, to Equation of Payments.

Geography.—Swinton's Complete Course, reviewed throughout.

Grammar.—Whitney's Essentials of English Grammar.

Writing, Drawing and Singing.

THIRD YEAR.

Reading.—Butler's History of the United States. Examination on the History.

Spelling.—Same as in former years.

Arithmetic.—Greenleaf's New Practical, completed and reviewed.

Geography.—Houston's Physical Geography.

Grammar.—Whitney's Essentials of English Grammar.

Compositions.—One each month, to be submitted on the days of the monthly examinations.

Writing, Drawing and Singing.

Written examinations are given once a month throughout the Grammar course, the pupils being marked upon the writing and spelling

of their papers, as well as upon the correctness of their answers to questions. Notices of the standing of the pupils at these examinations will be sent to their parents. Scholars falling below *six* on a scale of *ten* will not be promoted. Absences count *zero* unless made up.

HIGH SCHOOL.

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DIVISION ONE.—*Spelling Exercises*
 DIVISION TWO.—*English Composition*
 Second and third terms, original
 compositions every four weeks.
Reading—Works on English Literature and Classical Literature on alternate years.
 History on alternate years.
 and reading selections from English

ENGLISH COURSE.

YEARS.

FIRST.

Terms—One.
 Arithmetic.
 Physical Geography.
 English Analysis.

Two.
 Algebra.
 Natural History.
 English Analysis.

Three.
 Algebra.
 Physiology.
 Paradise Lost.

SECOND.

Higher Algebra.
 Botany or Bookkeeping
 Physiology.

Higher Algebra.
 Natural Philosophy.
 Paradise Lost.

Higher Algebra.
 Natural Philosophy.
 Paradise Lost.

THIRD.

Geometry.
 History, Ancient [to accession of Constantine]
 French or Chemistry.

Geometry.
 History, Middle age and Modern [to 30 year war]
 French or Chemistry.

Geometry.
 Surveying.
 History, Modern.
 French or English Literature.

FOURTH.

Surveying.
 Astronomy.
 Science of Government
 French [op.]

Astronomy.
 Political Economy.
 Rhetoric.
 French [op.]

Reviews of Studies.

CLASSICAL COURSE.

YEARS.

FIRST.

One.
 Latin Grammar,
 Latin Reader,
 English Analysis,
 Arithmetic.

Two.
 Latin Grammar,
 Latin Reader,
 Algebra.

Three.
 Latin Grammar,
 Caesar,
 Algebra.

SECOND.

Caesar.
 Greek Grammar.
 Algebra.
 Ancient Geography.

Caesar.
 Greek Grammar,
 Greek Reader,
 Algebra.
 Grecian History.

Cicero—Orations,
 Greek Grammar,
 Greek Reader,
 Algebra.
 Roman History.

THIRD.

Cicero—Orations completed,
 Xenophon's Anabasis
 French.

Ovid.
 Anabasis,
 French.

Ovid—completing
 2500 lines.
 Anabasis, completing 3 books.
 French.

FOURTH.

Virgil's *Æneid*
 Homer's *Iliad*.
 Geometry.
 Greek Composition,
 Latin Composition,
 Once a week through the year.

Æneid—completing 6 books.
 Cicero, *De Senectute*, *Iliad*, completing 3 books.
 Herodotus, 60 secs. of book VII,
 Geometry.

Cicero, *De Amicitia* and *De Officiis*,
 Greek,
 Latin,
 Algebra,
 Geometry } reviewed.

Music and drawing throughout the entire course.

Certain studies of the course e.g. French are optional.

In this school pupils are marked upon their daily recitations and upon their written examinations which occur once a month, and records of their standing are sent to their parents. Pupils falling below 6 on a scale of 10 will not be promoted at the end of the year. Absences are marked *pro* unless made up.

DIPLOMAS will be awarded to such as complete one of the above courses.

Advance in
studies.

A comparison of the above course of study with that of ten years ago, and much more, a visit to our schools today by any one who was familiar with them in 1868, will show that the schools have been brought to a much higher grade. A graduate of the Classical Department of our High School is now fitted to enter any college in the country, while graduates of the English Department are prepared to assume responsible positions in the business world with credit to themselves and to the town.

Studies after
leaving schools

Your Committee having thus sketched the course of instruction by which our youth are so far educated as to assume the duties of active life, now ask your indulgence for a word or two to their subsequent education. After completing so many years of study it is very natural for young men and women to assume that their education is finished, that they have but little more to learn. It takes but a few years, however, to disabuse them of this idea and for them to find that their education, instead of completed is only just begun. Once realizing this they begin to look back with regret upon their school days, and often to reproach themselves for making so little of their opportunities for education. Sometimes, of course, these self-reproaches are deserved, but often they are not. The scholar may have done all that he was able to do when in the High School, but during the few intervening years his mind has matured, so that now his ideas of education are such as he was not then competent to grasp. Instead, therefore, of regretting the past and chiding himself for not having done in youth the work which belongs to manhood, he is to make up his mind to enter upon his educational career anew, upon a plan befitting his maturer years.

Such an educational course has been made possible for every one of our graduates.

The Public Library a Higher School.

During the past ten years the town has not simply raised its standard of education in the schools; but has also provided an institution for Post-Graduate Study. That institution is the Southbridge Public Library, which already numbers some seven thousand carefully selected volumes. An examination of its catalogue shows that in every department of literature, it contains many of the best works in the English language. The materials for a *life course* of study are thus furnished to every citizen of the town. Furthermore, it has been the aim of the Library Committee, *first*, to provide such an orderly-arranged catalogue of the books, and, *secondly*, to keep the books under the care of such an intelligent and competent librarian that the library may actually serve as an Educational Institution. The success which has already been attained in that direction is so marked that a Committee like ours, to which are entrusted the educational affairs of the town, would be recreant to their duty if they did not recognize it with gratitude.

Need of best talent in the Library.

As guardians of the Schools we feel that we should secure the very best talent that can be procured for every grade, from the First Primaries up to the High School. But our interest does not end here. In turning over our graduates to be educated at the town's *Higher School*, we are solicitous that there, also, the very best talent obtainable should be secured, to direct the reading, and so the education, of those whose school days are no more.

SCHOOLS.

The following is a summary report of the condition and work of the several schools during the year :

PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

In this department an important work has been done in the matter of grading. The line between the First and Second Primaries, which has heretofore been wavering and indistinct, has now been clearly defined, as will be seen by consulting our course of Study. A number of the Schools also, whose status had not been clearly fixed, have now been given a positive rank, either as First or as Second Primary Schools. As now ranked, we have six Schools of each of these grades, while one—The Carpenter School—still remains without definite rank, having both First Primary and Second Primary studies and scholars.

First Primaries.—Mrs. Knight is still the efficient teacher of the Main street School. She has had in her room 111 different scholars during the year, 90 having, for a few days, been there at one time, which necessitated the opening of a new school. Notwithstanding the many thus taken away the School still has its full complement of pupils. The Elm street School has been under the care of two teachers—Miss Fannie C. Mason and Miss Belle Smith. The School has not made the progress that it might have made, had it been properly graded at the beginning of the year. At School street good work has been done under Miss Etta Whitford, and the good effect of a strict division of work between the two primary grades is al-

ready seen. The Union street school-room has at times literally swarmed with scholars, and the teacher—Miss Maria Cutting—deserves praise for what she has accomplished under such unpromising circumstances. There are now at the River street building two First Primaries. One was under Miss Carrie L. Cole until the middle of November, and was then divided, a part going with Miss Cole to the new building on Plimpton street, and part remaining under the charge of Miss Mary Pellett, whose work thus far gives promise of her abundant success as a teacher. The other (called, heretofore, a Second Primary, but not up to grade) was taught one term by Miss Lizzie Douty, and the past two terms has been under Miss Mary Pratt, whom the Committee regard as a valuable addition to our corps of teachers.

Second Primaries.—Last year's report spoke of the Main street School as a model one of its grade. It is no injustice to the other Schools to say that it continues to be the best Second Primary School in town; for, in addition to the care of such excellent teachers as Miss Lizzie Chamberlain and Miss Josie Rice, it is very evenly graded and has a class of scholars who are almost constantly at school. The Elm street School is not yet up to grade, having only recently been assigned a Second Primary rank. Nevertheless, the teacher, Miss Nellie Vinton, has done good work. At School street Miss A. R. Rowley has been doing double duty, having had an Intermediate Class in her room throughout the year, her own classes having been small and those in the Intermediate School unusually large. In addition to the thorough instruction of this class she has done her regular Second Primary work and prepared a class of her own proper scholars for promotion. Miss Fannie Freeman is still at Union street. Her School has suffered from having to take in a good many First Primary scholars, but she has managed to prepare a class very creditably for the Intermediate Department. River street School (known heretofore as a Third Primary, but of Second Primary grade) has been unfortunate in

a frequent change of teachers during the year. Miss Rice taught for a single term. Then Miss Lizzie Douty took charge for about half a term, when sickness compelled her to retire. The remainder of the term, Miss Jennie Litchfield, to whom the Committee are much indebted for help in such emergencies, carried on the school. The past term has been divided between Miss Ida J. Bartlett, whom we spared for a few weeks from the High School, and Miss Flora B. Allen. The new school on Plimpton street, under Miss Carrie L. Cole, is in a flourishing condition, though it could not yet be expected to be up to grade.

Carpenter School.—This school was opened in the Town Hall in November, and removed to its present location about New Years. As the ages of the scholars who attend must vary greatly, it has not seemed best to give the school a fixed rank until another school is opened in the same building. The teacher is Miss Jennie McVey, who is both faithful and apt to teach.

INTERMEDIATE SCHOOLS.

The Main street school has been under the care of Miss Iola M. Converse. The loss of Miss Messenger from the room at the close of last year made the Committee somewhat solicitous for its welfare; but under the able and faithful supervision of Miss Converse, the high character of the school has been maintained, and the class promoted this year is better prepared than any of its predecessors,

At School street Miss Ida M. Douty has taught. All who have visited her school and witnessed her assiduous, almost soldierlike, drilling of her scholars, especially in Intellectual Arithmetic, will see that she had the true idea of intermediate training—a leading of the pupil's mind over and over, and over the fundamental truths until they become an ineradicable part of his mental furnishing.

River street Intermediate was under the care of Miss Flora B. Allen until eight weeks before the close of the year when the nervous strain upon her became so great that she felt compelled to ask relief from her duties. Happily at that time the Committee were able to engage Mr. N. R. Potter of Woodstock, whom they appointed to this school and put in charge of the whole River street building. The schools had previously been much annoyed, and the town put to considerable expense, by the disorderly conduct of some of the older boys who defied the authority of a lady. We are glad to state that under Mr. Potter some of these roughs have been brought to terms, and that during his administration there has been a marked immunity from window breaking and kindred rascalities. The progress of the school during the year, while not equal to that of the other two, has been all that we could reasonably expect.

GRAMMAR SCHOOLS.

School street school still continues in its prosperous career under Miss Julia V. Haywood. The progress during the year, as evinced both by the monthly written examinations and the term and annual examinations is very commendable. Almost the only change the Committee have had to suggest during the year has been that the teacher should not herself work for the school so many hours outside of the school sessions, and that she also lighten the labors of a few of her pupils.

Main street school from various reasons, has been very small throughout the year. The first term, too, its misfortunes of last year continued to cripple it. Miss Lydia Steere, who was then in charge, had such a difficulty with her voice as nearly to incapacitate her for teaching; but, hoping every day to recover, she desired greatly to retain the school, and the Committee unwisely, as we see now, allowed her to do so. As a conse-

sequence, her successor, Miss Susie E. Morse, who took charge in the Fall term, had nearly three terms work to do in two terms. The school being small, however, and Miss Morse's energy being great, that work was really done. The discipline of the school, which had lapsed into a bad state, was restored to its normal condition, and the scholars were incited to hearty and successful efforts. The examination at the close of the year was such as to reflect great credit upon both scholars and teacher.

MIXED SCHOOLS.

Ammidown.—This school during the first term was taught by Miss Susie E. Morse, and under her able management assumed an entirely new aspect. The discipline, which had been very imperfect, became equal to that of any of the village schools, and the progress of the scholars in their studies was very marked. Miss Morse having been promoted, Miss Eliza A. Sampson became her successor, and has taught the school for two terms to the entire satisfaction, so far as we learn, of the community. She was at first unacquainted with our methods of instruction, but after a time acquired them and the examination at the close of the year gave evidence of faithful and successful teaching.

Bacon.—The handful of scholars in this school can hardly inspire the enthusiasm requisite for the most successful teaching; but Miss Nellie Walker, who has taught through the year has done patient and valuable work. One scholar has been fitted for the High School.

Dennison.—The first two weeks, this school was taught by Miss Flora B. Allen, but she having been transferred to the River street Intermediate, the services of Mr. Vernon T. Wetherell were secured. Under this gentleman the school has

been eminently prosperous, the scholars displaying a real enthusiasm for their work, and making very commendable progress in their studies.

Hooker.—Miss Sarah Hibbard, a teacher who was new to our methods conducted this school for two terms. She was most faithful and conscientious in her work but lacked confidence in herself. Her successor, Miss Clara L. Nichols, is a young teacher, but the work done by her gives promise of complete success. The annual examination of the school gave great satisfaction to all the members of the Committee.

Sumner.—This school has enjoyed the privilege of Miss Lottie Sherer's care for another year. Under her sunny smiles the school room, instead of being a place to be shunned, is a place that is eagerly sought by her pupils. Winning her scholars' love by her kindness, she teaches them with a patience that never ceases and an enthusiasm that never flags. Not only the children, but their parents also, have come to recognize in her a true friend, from whom they may always expect kindness as well as truth, and so her influence for good is very great.

HIGH SCHOOL.

Our High School has been taught by Mr. George H Mellen, principal, and Miss Ida J. Bartlett, assistant. Every successful teacher has a positive individual character and so imparts to his school certain features peculiarly his own. This was pre-eminently true of Miss Beach, Mr. Mellen's predecessor. Upon assuming charge of the school, therefore, the present principal needed some time to bring his pupils into line with his own established methods of work. That he has accomplished this, and that the school is now progressing in accordance with a liberal and well-ordered plan of work is evident to all who are acquainted with its recent

history. Apart from the intellectual training of his pupils, in which his success has been, perhaps, as great as the elements with which he has had to work would allow, Mr. Mellen has earnestly endeavored to give to the school a higher *morale*. If a few of his scholars have seemed inappreciative of the generous ideas of study and conduct which he has tried to impart to them, the fault can hardly be called his. Certainly he has labored with a high purpose for the good of the whole school. Perhaps the most marked progress during the year has been made by the class of young men who are fitting for college, an enthusiasm for study having been awakened in them which not all the scholars possess.

Owing to the extension of the course to four years there is no class to graduate this year.

The attention of parents is invited to the courses of study in this school as they are now arranged. An effort has been made to make the Classical course as nearly as possible the equivalent of a course in one of the great fitting schools, like those of Andover or Easthampton, and to make the English course such as to fit scholars thoroughly for practical life. By making certain studies of the latter course optional, objections that have heretofore been brought against it as "too bookish" are now removed.

The Committee are happy to announce that they have secured Mr. Mellen for another year. Having the fullest confidence both in his genuine interest in every one of his pupils and in his competency to advise them wisely, we earnestly hope that parents will not only consult with him as to the direction of their children's studies, but will also extend to him that hearty sympathy and co-operation in his work which is needed for his truest success. Parents should remember they do not stand in the same relation to a high school teacher that they do to the mechanic who builds or repairs their houses, or even in that relation which they sustain towards teachers of the lower schools. When in these lower

grades the individual characters of pupils are not yet strongly developed; but in the High School they are just at that formative period when it behooves an instructor to know, not only the intellectual strength, but also something of the personal history and prospects of each scholar. Now in a town no larger than ours this is possible, provided the teacher is a conscientious worker and has the appreciation and aid which parents owe to him. "Honor to whom honor is due," says good authority. Certainly no town can afford to overlook in its bestowal of honor, one in whom high character and abilities are so indispensable as in its High School teacher.

DRAWING.

Instruction in drawing has been given in all the schools throughout the year, the Committee endeavoring to comply both with the letter and the spirit of the state requirements, by employing for this work the very best of talent. This they have secured in Mr. Frank Parson, C. E., who has devoted his whole time to this department. Besides his work in the schools he has given very thorough instruction to our teachers, so that some of them are already competent to take full charge of their classes. The Committee, however, are of the opinion that Mr. Parson's supervision of this department will still be needed for at least the coming year.

In consideration of the excellent work already obtained from our scholars; and as an incentive to them to improve, the Committee have voted to select annually from each school the five best drawings, and have them suitably bound and placed among the art works of the Public Library; the subjects to be assigned and the selections to be made by the drawing master.

DRAWING MASTER'S REPORT.

The following is the report of Mr. Parson concerning his work :

During this year the Drawing in the Schools has been under the care of a special teacher.

The plan has been to combine the best elements of the many different courses that are before the public.

Walter Smith's books have been largely drawn upon and the course in Design has thus far made the pupils thoroughly familiar with the production of beauty by means of symmetrical repetition about an axis or a centre, and by repetition of a unit vertically, horizontally, or in all directions. They have all received instruction concerning the production of beauty by means of subtlety in curves, angles and proportions, and concerning the nature and value of breadth and repose in design.

The aim in this part of the course has been to create a pure and correct sense of beauty, to familiarize the hand and eye with symmetry as a fundamental principle of beauty, and of organic nature, and to develop the faculty of invention that children possess to such a wonderful degree.

The enthusiasm in the Intermediate Schools has been astonishing. The scholars design borders, frames, tiles, mats, vases, rosettes, of conventionalized leaves and flowers, etc., (the pupils often drawing from nature) and many of these designs are beautiful, though the majority have nothing to recommend them except their novelty; which is always surprising.

In the Intermediate Schools nearly every pupil takes a pleasure in design, while in the Grammar Schools it is a task to most.

Above the Intermediate Schools, also, the invention is not so ready, but the designs show more care and true beauty.

The other grand division of the course consists of copying from the flat and from the real (as much as possible). In this department of the instruction, knowledge is preferred to skill, and rapidity and strength are sought rather than fineness and studied care. Finding that a child *dislikes* to draw, *will* not draw enthusiastically a pat-

tern that has been long in its possession, it has been thought best to adopt the system of drawing into blank books from loose copies, which are exchanged as soon as drawn and it has awakened an interest and produces a quantity and quality of work, that no system of printed books could ever approach.

Over a thousand of the best plates of *Hermes'*, Cassell's, White's and many other systems are in use. Stump drawing has been introduced, and work has been done in the schools that will compare favorably with the best of its kind that was shown at the Centennial.

Perspective has been treated in the schools to some extent, but not with as good results as the teacher hoped for.

The regular teachers, however, have taken lessons in drawing to the end that they may soon be able to take entire charge of the instruction in this branch, and they have a thorough grasp of perspective, and understand the method of making the perspective of any object from its projections. From the teachers this most important knowledge of perspective will gradually pass into the schools and we shall have no more of those impossible lines that so often mar the work even of skillful artists.

The teachers have shown themselves willing and faithful in the study of drawing, and have, for the most part, progressed rapidly. Their work shows great care and finish. Most of them are able to give a good part of the instruction in drawing proper to their schools. In the Primary Schools the teachers are fully able to give all instruction with a very little supervision, and in these schools some of the best work of the year has been done; the enthusiasm of the pupils is great, and the quality and quantity of work is worthy the interest. The drawing here is on the blackboard and slate, much of it from memory and dictation, two of the finest exercises possible, and because of their more frequent use here the real power and mastery of a subject is greater in the Primaries, on an average, than in the higher schools. The pupils here are interested by various means, such as allowing a pupil to dictate an exercise of his own invention or finding; having a pupil draw some object (often from nature) for the others to copy, when the little instructor criticizes the work of the class, and then another pupil takes the post of honor.

A roll of honor is published in the *SOUTHBIDGE JOURNAL* at the end of each term, and this spurs some that no other influence could reach, and helps all.

In a few schools the drawing is backward, but on the whole it is a decided success, and it is very satisfactory to know that the Primaries are laying the solid foundation for a constant and rapid improvement in the years to come.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

(1.) Your Committee would renew with urgency their recommendation of last year in regard to the adoption of new truuant laws which shall conform to the Statutes of the Commonwealth. Such a set of laws, suitable for our adoption, has been forwarded to the School Committee by the Secretary of the Board of Education, and it is to be hoped that the town will, without delay incorporate them among its By-Laws.

(2.) The careful attention of the voters of the town is called to our school grounds. We have now good school buildings, the rooms in most of them being light and airy and well furnished. The grounds surrounding the school houses, however, are, with few exceptions, positively unsightly and anything but a credit to a town that takes such a commendable pride in its public improvements,

The Committee, therefore, recommend that a special committee, of which the School Committee shall form a part, be appointed to investigate this subject, to estimate the cost of such improvements as they deem desirable, and to report to the town at its first meeting after the ensuing annual meeting.

(3.) We submit the following estimate of the appropriations for the ensuing year, and recommend that the sums named be granted :

High School		\$1800 00
Common Schools—		
For salaries of teachers	\$7000 00	
For music	400 00	
For wood and care of buildings	600 00	
	<hr/>	8000 00
Contingent		500 00
		<hr/>
		\$10,300 00

Respectfully submitted,

ELISHA M. PHILLIPS,	}	Committee.
GEORGE A. JACKSON,		
BENJAMIN V. STEVENSON,		

Whole number of children in town May 1, 1877, between the ages of 5 and 16	1397
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Whole number of children in school between 5 and 15....	1350
“ “ “ “ under 5	11
“ “ “ “ over 15... ..	41
“ “ different scholars.....	1402
Average number in each school for year.....	35
“ per cent. of attendance “	79
“ length of schools “ in weeks.....	33.38
Number of different teachers during year.....	31
Teacher of drawing.....	1
Number of male teachers.....	3
“ female teachers.....	27
Salary of teacher in High School.....	\$1200 00
“ assistant “ per week.....	12 00
Average pay of teachers, except High School, per weer...	8 74



It will be seen that the total number of different scholars in school during the year is very large, actually greater than the census reports as residing in town May 1, 1877. This is an increase of 214 over last year, and is largely accounted for by the new effort to enforce the law.

TABULAR VIEW OF SCHOOLS.

SCHOOLS.	No of different Scholars.	Number first term.	Number second term.	Number third term.	Average attendance for the year.	Average per cent. of attendance.	Number weeks school.
High School - - - - -	39	36	31	32	28	84	39
Main Street Grammar- - - - -	32	32	26	20	21	79	36
School Street Grammar - - - - -	44	44	38	37	35	88	36
Main street Intermediate - - - - -	56	44	48	48	38	82	36
School street Intermediate - - - - -	60	37	49	48	38	86	36
River street Intermediate - - - - -	74	46	39	45	32	75	36
Main street Primary, No. 2 - - - - -	67	53	55	56	45	82	35
Elm street Primary, No. 2 - - - - -	78	36	39	40	27	70	35
Union street Primary No. 2 - - - - -	73	43	45	57	38	78	33
School street Primary, No. 2 - - - - -	45	37	33	38	32	86	35
River street Primary, No. 2 - - - - -	57	52	36	40	34	60	35
Plimpton street Primary, No. 2 - - - - -	52	—	—	52	47	90	10
River street Primary, No. 1, A - - - - -	74	75	85	55	56	79	35
River street Primary, No. 1 B - - - - -	67	66	68	45	46	77	35
School street Primary, No. 1 - - - - -	70	45	48	49	35	75	35
Union street Primary, No. 1 - - - - -	97	63	67	72	49	73	35
Elm street Primary, No. 1 - - - - -	65	53	61	66	41	68	34
Main street Primary, No. 1 - - - - -	69	52	68	59	47	78	35
Carpenter Primary - - - - -	80	—	32	58	34	76	20
Ammidown School - - - - -	65	49	44	46	37	81	34
Bacon School - - - - -	16	11	8	16	9	80	34
Dennison School - - - - -	42	31	32	35	28	86	34
Hooker School - - - - -	21	21	18	15	18	80	34
Sumner School - - - - -	59	35	43	41	30	76	34
	1,402	961	1,018	1,070	353	79	801

